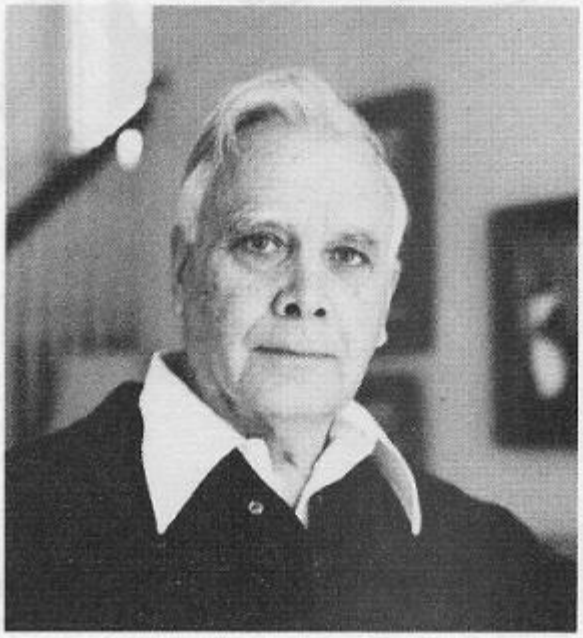
MMR_0070 Edward J. Costello



MMR NO. 70, EDWARD J. COSTELLO

Master Model Railroader Number 70 is Edward J. Costello, of Havertown, PA, a veteran of over a half-century of model building. Most of us became model railroaders in the traditional way, with the childhood gift of a toy train set sparking our interest. Ed entered the hobby in a different way. While living in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, between 1920 and 1924, Ed met two English electrical engineers who were avid model builders. Their enthusiasm was catching, but his English friends gave Ed more than enthusiasm, they gave him knowledge. At a time when American model railroading was almost entirely tinplate, Ed began using English skills and techniques to scratch-build railroad models in ¼" scale.

By 1934 Ed had decided that he did not have enough space to build the type of layout that he wanted in ¼" scale, so he switched to OO. **Scale-Craft** and **Nason** were the two principal suppliers of OO parts and kits at that time. Ed tells us that **Scale-Craft** kits were fairly simple to build, but assembling a **Nason** locomotive kit was almost like scratch-building.

World War II and the emergence of HO as a more popular scale drove almost all manufacturers of OO equipment from the field, leaving OO the realm of the craftsman. For over 30 years, everything that Ed has added to his layout has been scratch-built. Ed has no complaints about this, since he derives more pleasure from building than from operating.

Several years ago Ed discovered electronics and began applying it to his model railroading. He has found this a most fascinating part of the hobby, and his 700' OO empire now has signalling, sound and an electronic control system.

Ed earned his living running his own automobile repair shop and retired 12 years ago. He credits his wife and four children with letting him have both the space and the time for his hobby.

Ed is especially proud to be MMR #70, as he is in his seventieth year. He has earned Achievement Certificates for Motive Power, Cars, Structures, Scenery, Civil Engineer, Electrical Engineer and Author. Even after all his years as a model builder, Ed found that earning Achievement Certificates sharpened his modeling skills. He feels that this growth in his abilities has been his greatest reward from the Achievement Program.